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TRAVEL SKETCHES IN THE OLD WORLD

Travel Sketches *in the* Old World

By

Woodruff K. Aykroyd

Thomas S. Rockwell Company
Chicago
1931

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Black and White

"Then your two years in Paris may be regarded as so much wasted time?" said the Vicar (in Somerset Maugham's "Of Human Bondage").

"I don't know about that. I had a very jolly two years, and I learned one or two useful things."

"What?"

"I learned to look at hands, which I'd never looked at before. And instead of just looking at houses and trees I learned to look at houses and trees against the sky. And I learned also that shadows are not black but colored."

If I could only, by some magic beyond that of my pencil, reproduce the background of the old houses, and convey something of the color, denied to the artist in black and white; I might feel that this record of my two years in the Old World would convey some greater part of the charm and quaintness that lies in these odd corners.

But whether it is the bias of my profession of architect, or a difficulty with the pencil which I have chosen as a medium, I have found myself compromising between my desire to convey the atmosphere and my wish to depict the infinitely interesting detail of old buildings, old iron, old craftsmanship. To any one who has toiled up the ascent to Dinan, or walked in the summer serenity of the Devon countryside, or sat in the soft brilliance of an Italian day; these relics of past days summon something more than sights of old buildings.

There is an inescapable feeling of the many years that have washed away the bright newness they bore when mason and carpenter laid down their tools. There is some occult appeal in the thought of the generations of folk who have somehow managed to impress their personalities on these places. Then, too, and here again it may be my bias, there is a profound respect for those dead and gone builders, whose eye for line and care for curious detail are the envy of today, and, it must be confessed, the source of much that is pleasing and called "original."

To the one beholder, a view in Quimper may bring up the remembrance of the odd pottery for which the town is famous, to another it may recall the voluble shrug of a villager whose directions were incomprehensible, to another it may mean a meal, to still another a timbered house—but may I hope that to each one these sketches will bring back a little of that something which makes the Old World unforgettable.

WOODRUFF K. AYKROYD

Toronto, Canada

Acknowledgments

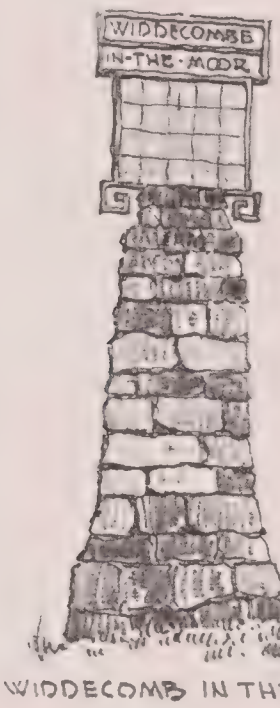
The sketch in Rouen, appearing on page 27, is reproduced by permission of Pencil Points, New York; and those of Dinan on page 37, Le Mans, page 44, and Chinon, page 36, by permission of The Journal, Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, Toronto, in whose pages these sketches first appeared.

TRAVEL SKETCHES IN THE OLD WORLD

WHITEPARISH

WESTCOTT

SHALFORD



WIDDECOMB IN THE MOOR

REDHILL

ROADSIDE SKETCHES

ENGLAND. 1930.

"It's little I care what path I take,
And where it leads it's little I care . . ."

TAKELEY. (ESSEX)

"Oh, to be in England . . ."

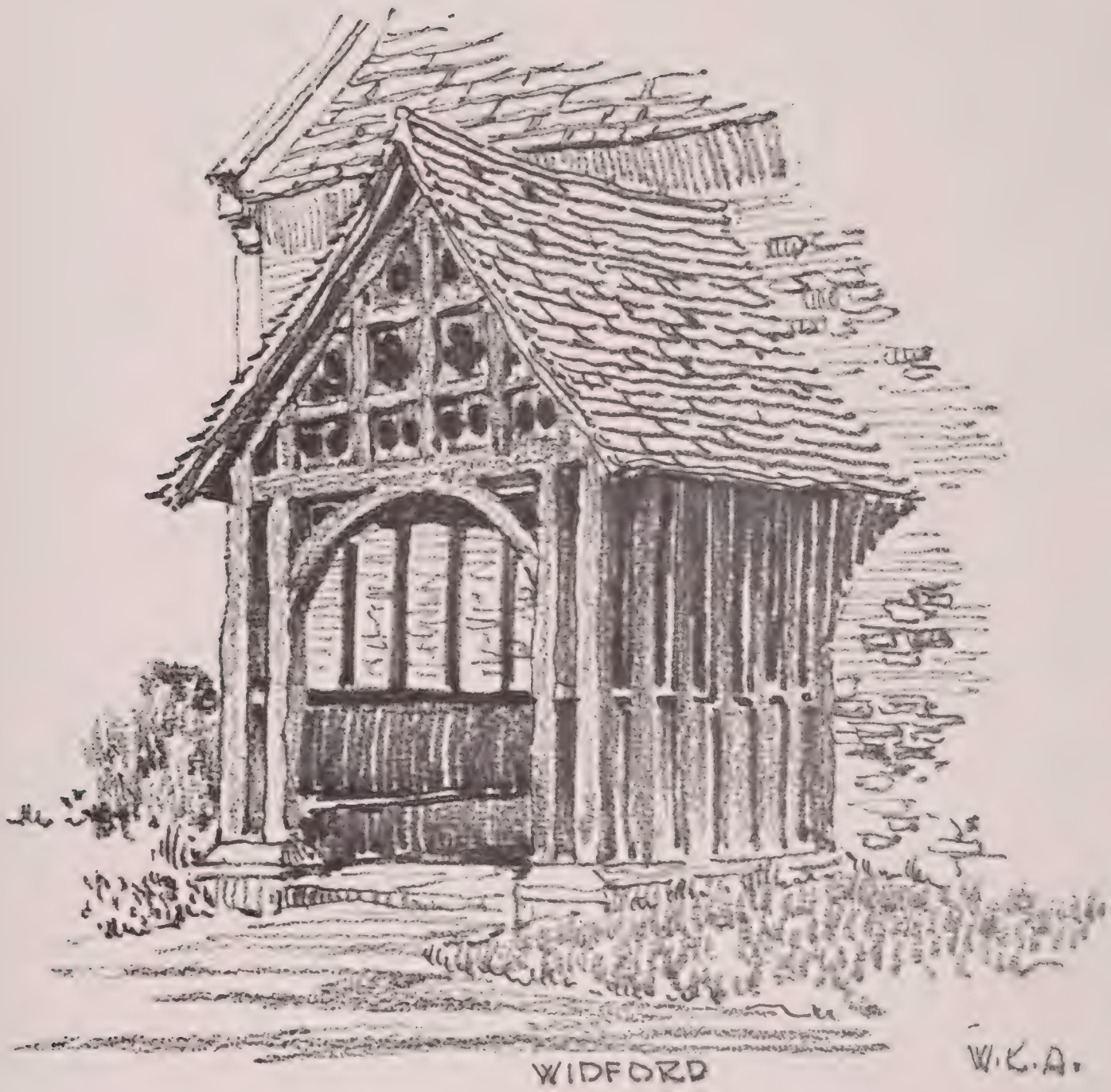
An old "Black and White", named for
the dark timber-work and the bright plaster.

A HOUSE IN ELY

"When my task is done, I shall not accept a barony, but refusing with a bow, retire to a cottage in the country."

"The years are on your grave."

"Wide open and unguarded stand our gates."
Thomas Bailey Aldrich.



Church Porch

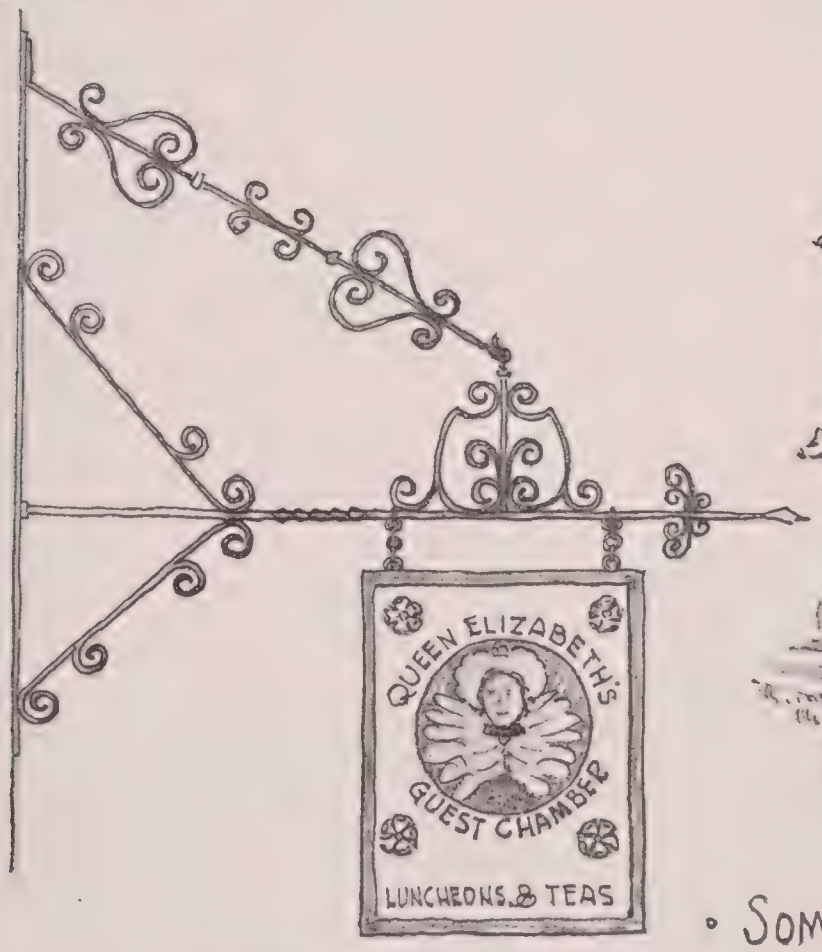
Church Porch

According to the books of this 13th century church Edward the Confessor was lord of the manor which sponsored it.

Typical old houses in a small village just north of Colchester.

THE RUSHBROOKE ARMS
NEAR BURY ST. EDMUNDS

THE WHITE SWAN
STRATFORD-ON-AVON



CANTERBURY

GORDON ARMS

SOME ENGLISH INN SIGNS

"No, sir; there is nothing which has yet been contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn."

Samuel Johnson.

ALONG THE ROAD IN HOLLAND.
1930

"Here by the mill the castled clouds
Mocked themselves in the dizzy water."

ALONG THE DYKE IN HOLLAND.

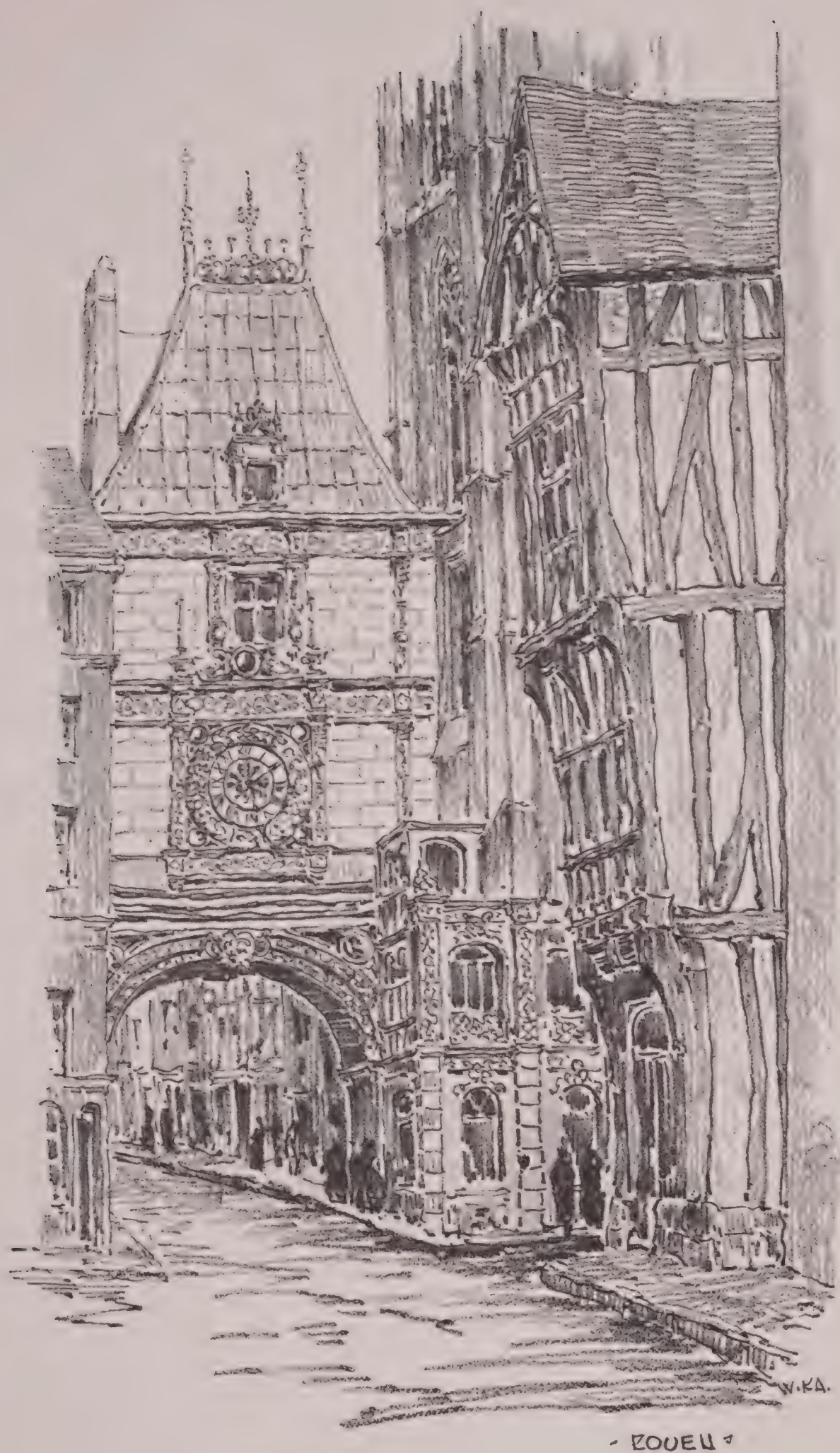
"Except wind stands as never it stood,
It is an ill wind turns none to good."
Thomas Tusser.

AU TEMPS JADIS - VERNON -

An old house on the main street of Vernon facing the square. It's quaintness has been capitalized by the tea room and antique shop which occupy it.

ROUEN

An old timbered group and the gate to the cathedral gardens.



Tour de la grosse Horloge erected 1389—
restored 1892. The clock and porch date from 1527.

15th century house in Rue St. Romain,
adjoining the cathedral.

"The old houses . . . .
They watch by the high cathedrals."

A church of curious design with strangely incongruous timber-work. The building has fallen into disuse and remains merely an odd relic of religion.

Two unique old houses with a single archway
serving as an entrance for them both.

"The high, white shoulders of the gables
slouch together for consultation . . ."

LISIEUX

Some old houses in the Place Victor Hugo.

- AN ARCADED HOUSE IN DOL -

A fine example of the type of arcaded house which is rapidly disappearing from French villages.

Dinan is situated on a steep granite rock,
two hundred feet above the Rance river.

"Had I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare,
The house for me, no doubt, were a house in the city square;
Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the window there!

Tour de l' Horloge—15th century

"Oh glory, that we wrestle
So valiantly with time."
Richard Milner

Rue de Jerzual—a winding street of Dinan.

An interesting timbered house.

• PLACE TERRE AU DUC •
QUIMPER

The good bourgeois of Quimper serve as models for the picturesque figures painted on the famous pottery which the town exports.

"The very houses seem asleep."
Wordsworth.

A street corner facing the quay where the smell of the sea and of the fishermen's catch mingle.

"On the marble pavement dust grows."

AN OLD GATEWAY IN VANNES

Porte St. Patern—a survival of the old fortifications of Vannes.

Cafe' Tabac—a drink—a cigarette—
or a stamp!

"So, friend, your shop was all your house!
Its front, astonishing the street,
Invited view from man and mouse . . ."

Old timbered houses unspoiled by coats of plaster, stand in the shadow of the ruined chateau of Chinon.

15th century house.

15th century house of the cathedral town.

Small Italian towns lie at the foot of the Alps, their white houses gay with red tile roofs.

Typical Venetian palace on the Grand canal.

"In front of my gate the horse and carriage-way in a single night has turned into a river-bed."

Most famous of the Florentine bridges over the Arno, the Ponte Vecchio is lined with shops like a gaudy bazaar.

"Build on, and make thy castles high and fair,
Rising and reaching upward to the skies."

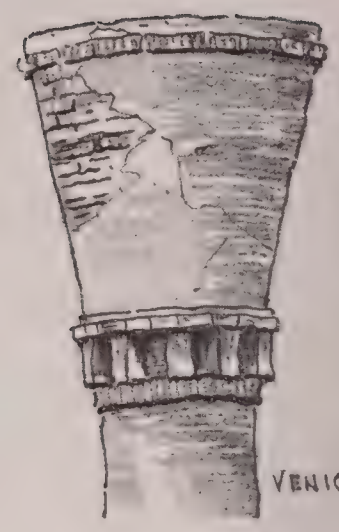
Longfellow.

THE CLOCK TOWER · CAPRI ·

"Far across the quiet roofs the hour is tolled
From ghostly towers . . . ."

SAN GIMIGNANO

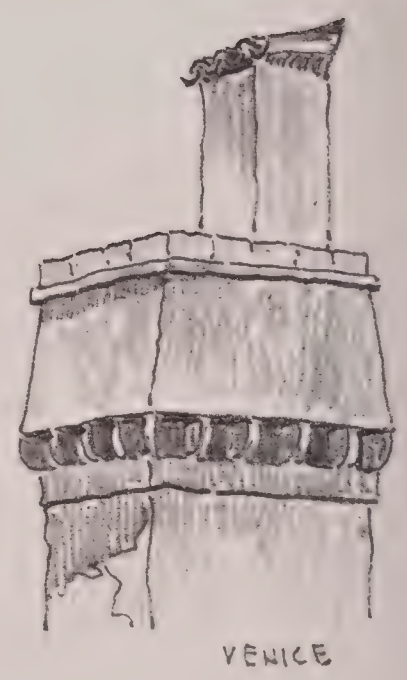
SAN GIMIGNANO



VENICE

SAN GIMIGNANO

VENICE



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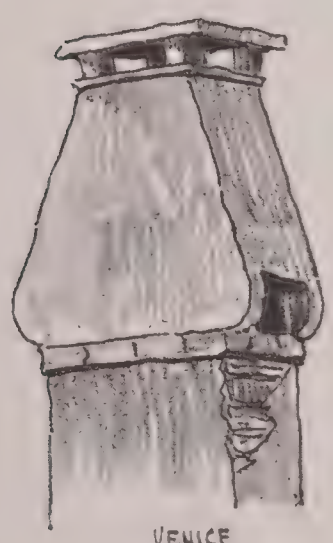


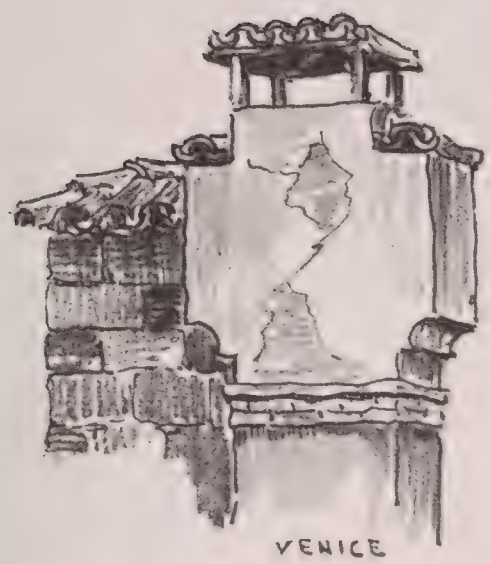
VENICE

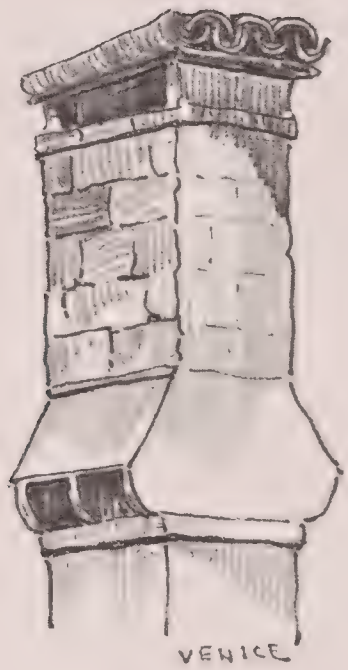
ITALIAN CHIMNEY TOPS

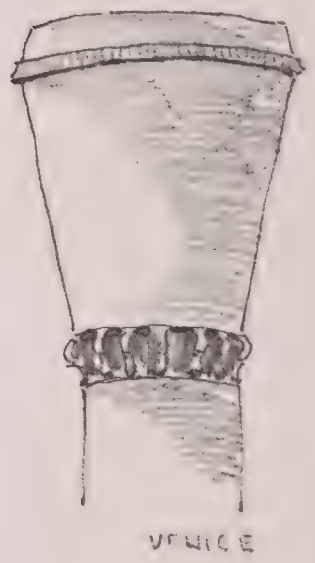
1928 - W.K.A.

Another two ran up the ladder, and
tied some smoke to the chimney.
"That certainly finishes it," they said.

Peter Pan.

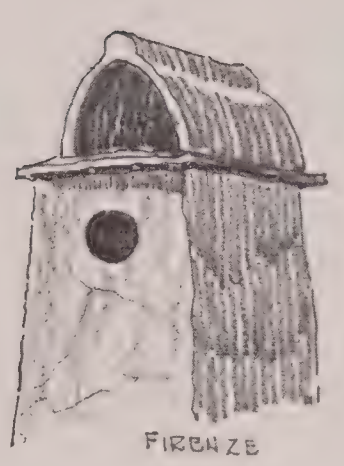






ITALIAN CHIMNEY TOPS
VENICE. 1978
W.KA.

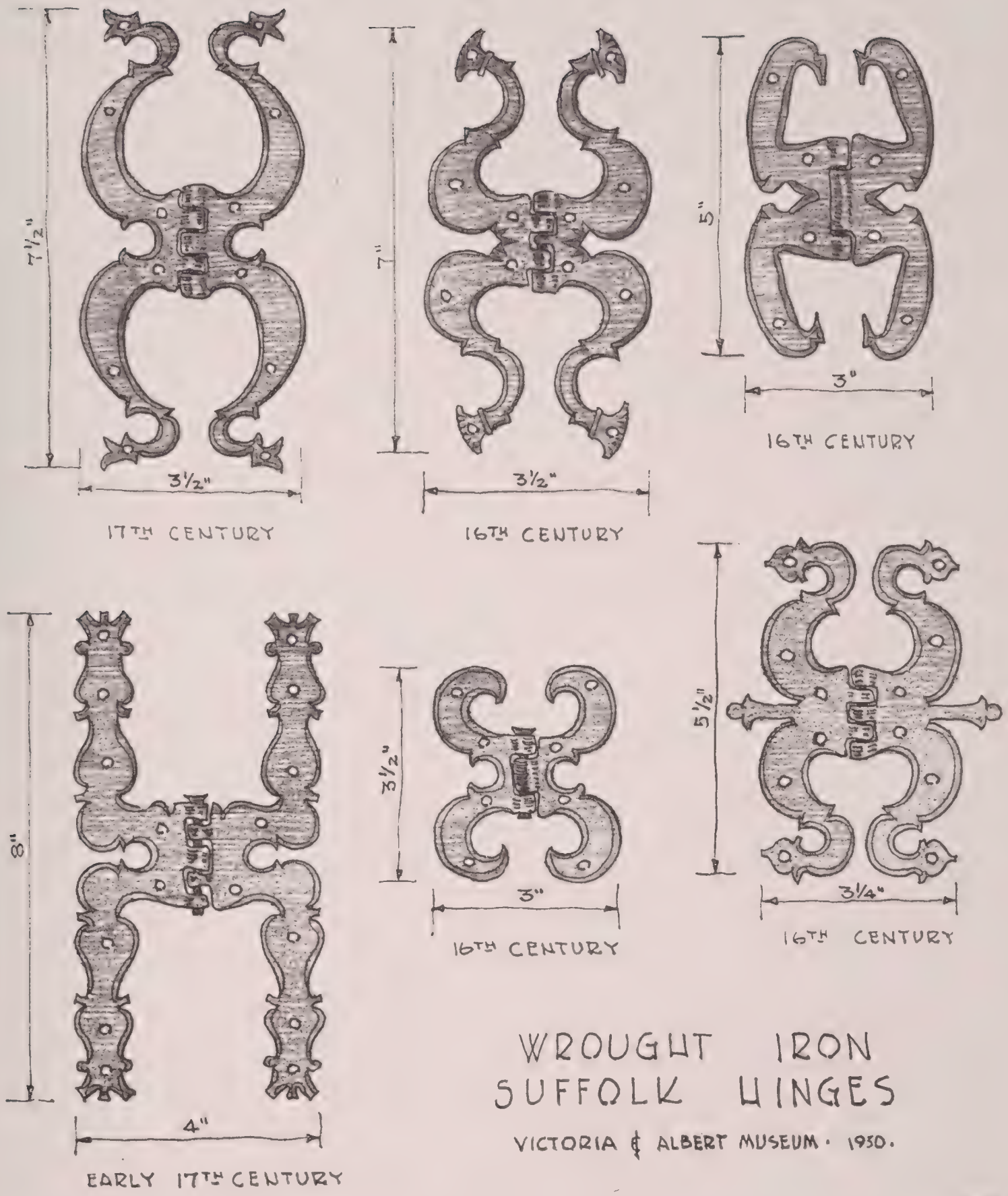
Old stone and cracking plaster—Venetian chimney-tops follow an architectural pattern found only in the city of which they are a part.



ITALIAN CHIMNEY TOPS
1928.

W.M.A.

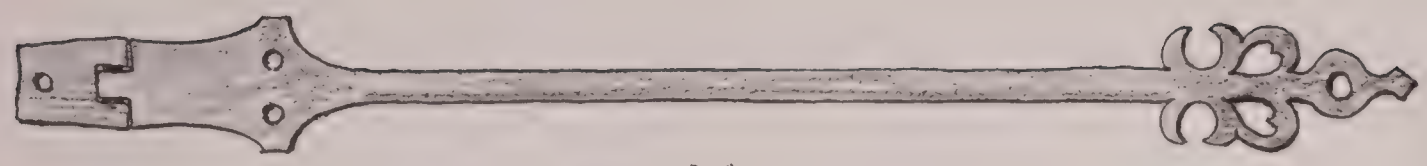
"Sir, he made a chimney in my father's house,
and the bricks are alive at this day to testify it."
King Henry VI.



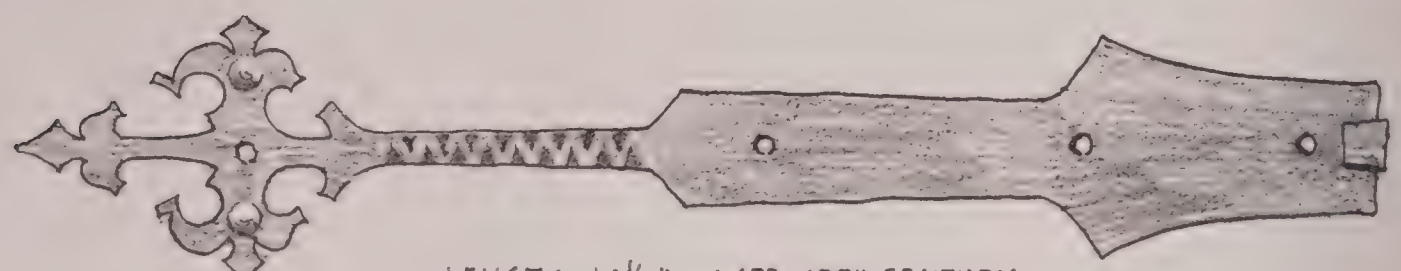
WROUGHT IRON
SUFFOLK HINGES

VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM · 1950.

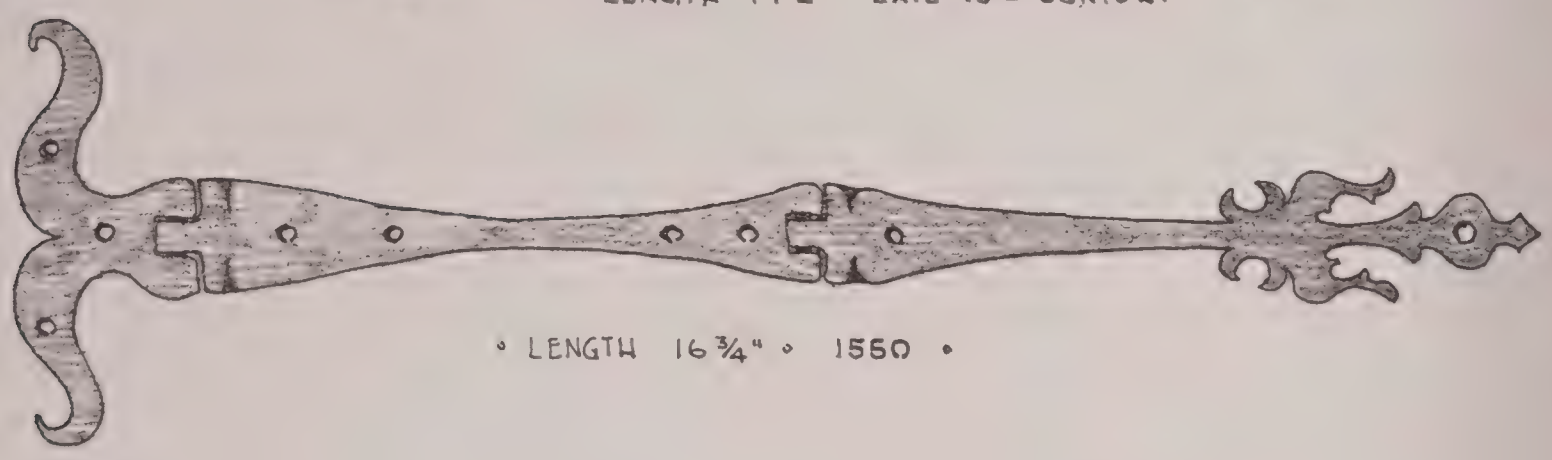
W.K.A.



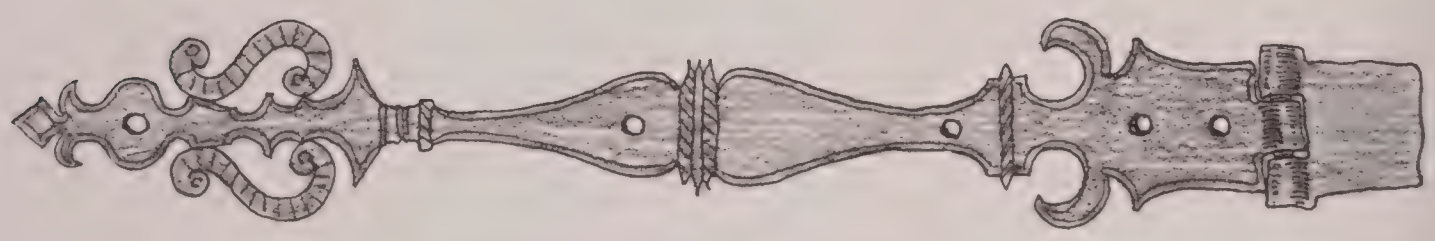
• LENGTH 14 3/4" • LATE 15TH CENTURY •



• LENGTH 14 1/2" • LATE 15TH CENTURY •



• LENGTH 16 3/4" • 1550 •

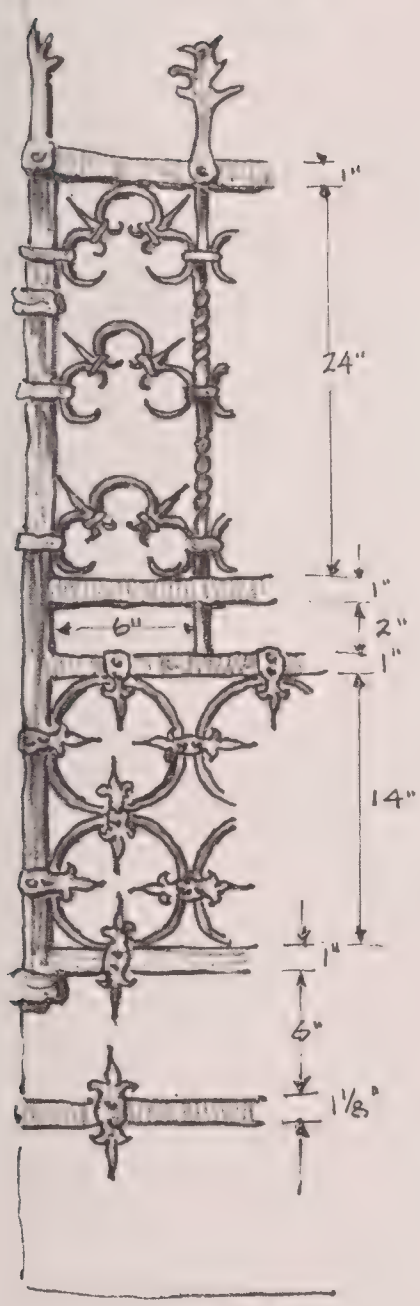


• LENGTH 16" • 1600 •

GERMAN WROUGHT IRONWORK

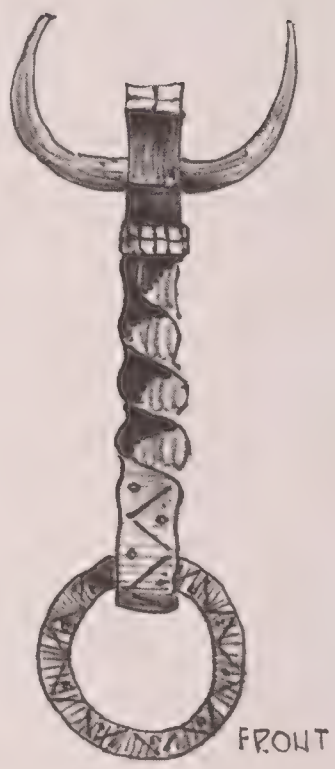
VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM. 1930

W.K.A.



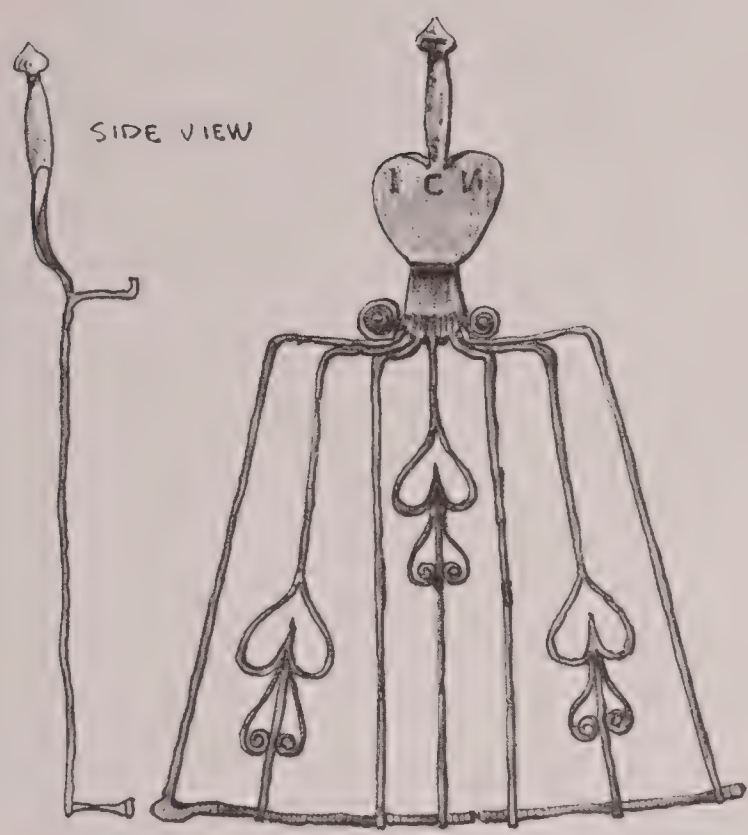
VENICE.

WINDOW GRILLE

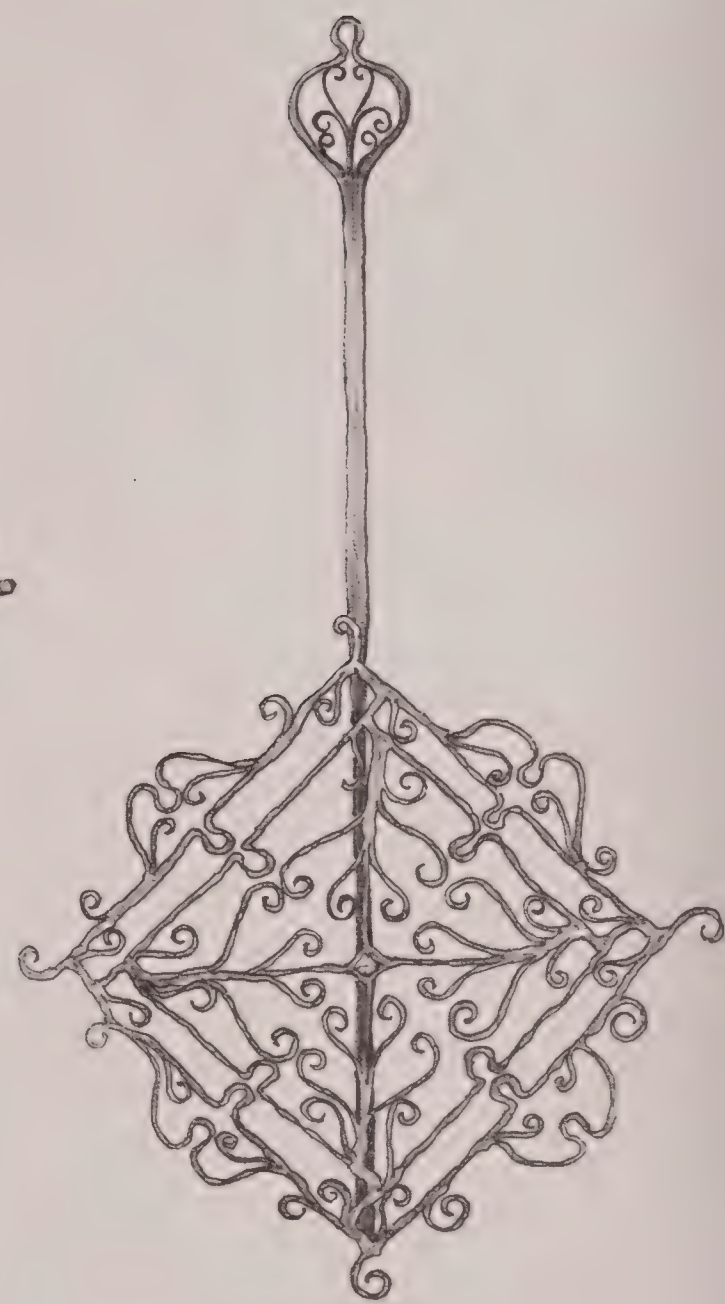


WALL RINGS.

IRONWORK · ITALY ·



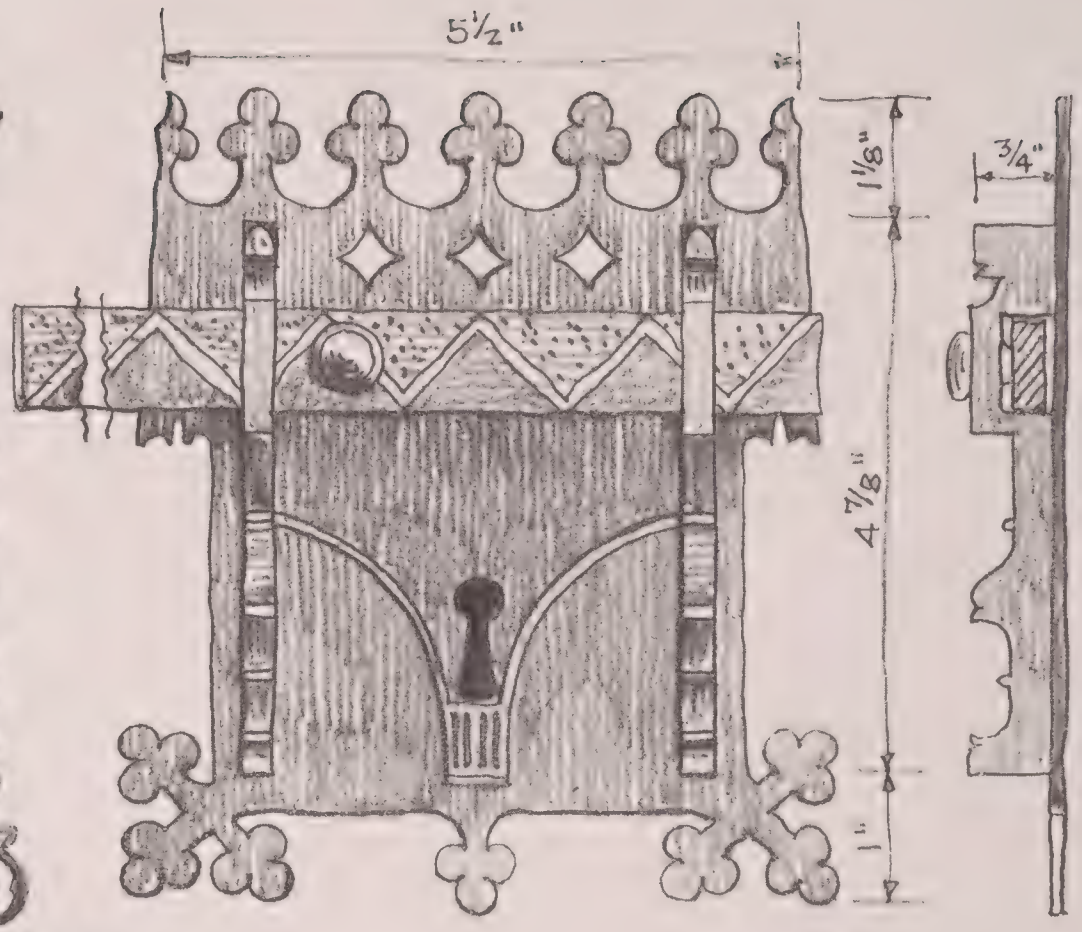
ENGLISH GRIDIRON · 18TH. CENTURY



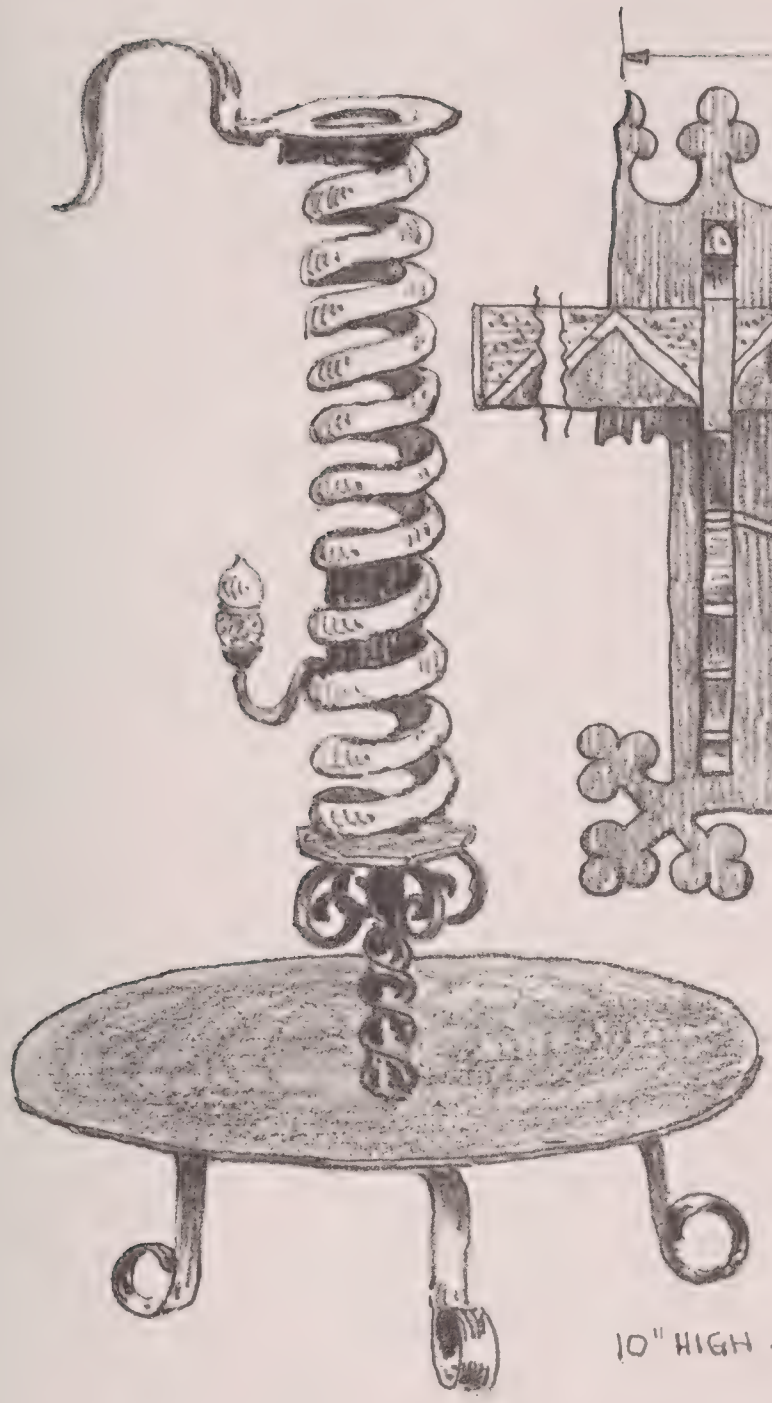
ITALIAN GRIDIRON
· 17TH. CENTURY ·

W.E.A.

· SOME IRONWORK FROM
THE VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM ·



LOCK FROM A DOOR IN
WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL



GERMAN CANDLESTICK
OF THE 17TH CENTURY

W.B.A. 1930

"At a thousand gates and ten thousand
doors the fish-shaped keys turn."

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